



## ON OUR SHORT LIST

# ROOMS WITH A VIEW

*Why stay at the Holiday Inn when there's a castle for rent?*

Lisa Habicht '87

It was the grand prize of Macy's Flower Show in April: one-week's accommodations for two at the Castello di Montegufoni, a 12th-century castle south of Florence, Italy. Located in a picturesque setting in the sun-filled Tuscan countryside, the castle offers lovely views of vineyards and olive groves from which the castle's own Chianti wine and virgin olive oil are produced. A dream vacation, straight out of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

For Lisa Habicht, whose company, Cuendet USA, is making all the arrangements for the vacation prize, it was a chance to inform people that a fantasy vacation can become reality more easily than they might think.

"Many people dream about vacationing at a castle or having a wedding at a very special place, but most of them don't know how to go about it, or assume it will be very expensive," says Habicht. Not so, she says.

Habicht runs two companies that are the American representatives of European property rental firms. Cuendet USA lists more than 1,500 villas, farmhouses, and castles throughout Italy. Grand Luxe International offers similar accommodations in Germany, as well as resort hotels and pensions. While some properties are quite luxurious, and are priced accordingly, there are many rentals available for as little as \$200 a week.

"Sure, we have clients who are fulfilling a fantasy," says Habicht. "But our market really is professional people who are tired of hotels and enjoy the tranquility of a home or villa. People who are very culturally oriented."

Based in Allendale, New Jersey, Habicht and her staff of three handle not only the property rentals, but also whatever special travel arrangements



*Located in Italy's Tuscan countryside, the Castello di Montegufoni is set in the heart of a vast cultivated estate with vineyards and olive groves. Apartments in the castle are available for vacation rental.*

might be required, from organizing convention accommodations to site location for a magazine photo shoot to wedding planning. "I have personally helped the bride get ready for her special day," says Habicht.

Habicht's foray into international travel is a natural. The daughter of German parents, she traveled in Europe throughout her childhood and is fluent in both German and Italian. "I am very well acquainted with the regions where the properties I am pro-

moting are located," she says.

An international relations major, Habicht spent her junior year at the University of Würzburg in Germany. She launched her businesses several months after her 1987 graduation, and when business grew 500 percent from 1989 to 1990, she incorporated.

"We offer a unique European holiday," says Habicht, "a way to really experience the history and beauty of the region firsthand."

—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY



## IT'S RADIO, IT'S LIVE

Vaughn Harper '68

For the past decade, Vaughn Harper has been New York City's most listened-to late night radio voice. Every weeknight, his mix of mellow R&B, jazz, and meaningful conversation—the *Quiet Storm* on WBLS-FM—puts millions of listeners in the mood to be with their special someone and helps them make the transition from a day of work routines to the next morning.

Despite the impact he has on so many lives every night, Harper doesn't feel he's yet done with his show what he has committed himself to doing. "I don't feel that I've taken the *Quiet Storm* to every level it's supposed to have gone to," he says.

Last fall, when he began broadcasting his show once a week from the Manhattan club Sweetwaters, the Wednesday night event instantly became an "in" happening on New York's music scene, with lines to get in stretching around the block and people being turned away. It was then that Harper took a step toward reaching the next level.

The resulting *Quiet Storm Live* has

become an excitingly unpredictable mix of performances—some planned, some spontaneous—by both established and new music acts, and interviews by Harper. It was inspired by Los Angeles's "R&B Live" popular club gathering of members of the black recording industry.

"That was an industry concept," says Harper. "What I did was bring together everyday music listeners, the acts, and the radio, so that the record companies can see the people who are buying the music, the acts can get exposed to people they wouldn't normally get exposed to, and we can all rub elbows."

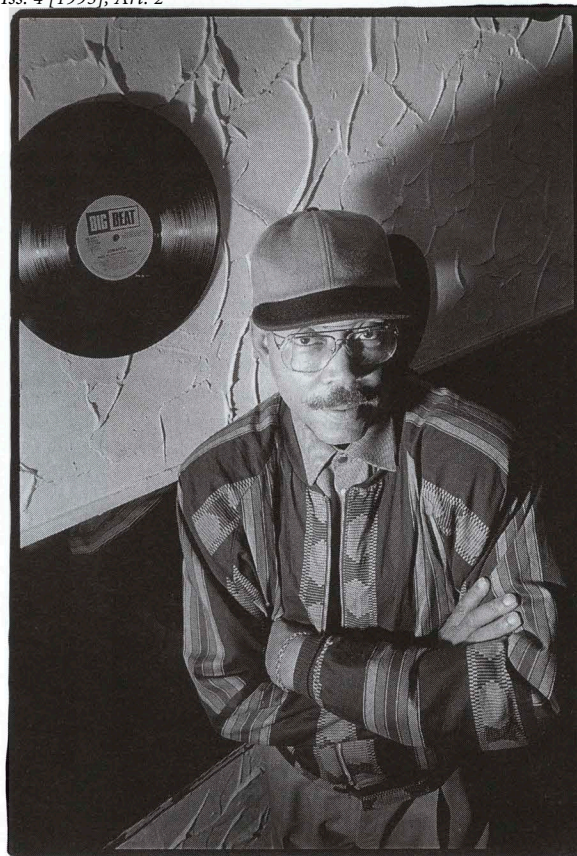
The formula has been working. With artists, celebrities, and record executives regularly in attendance, *Quiet Storm Live* and Harper's Wednesday-night radio numbers have blossomed. "I've never been con-

cerned about ratings, never," insists the 1968 College of Arts and Sciences graduate. "I'm trying to bring old radio back to the future, in terms of what radio was supposed to be about: people."

The *Quiet Storm* hit Japan five years ago, with a one-hour mid-night version—syndicated through Harper's production company, Velvet Voice Associates—and has been number one since its inception. Europe and the Caribbean could be next.

When he was three, a nursery school teacher told Harper's mother he was going to be a great communicator. "I love talking to people and being able to express to them," he says. "That's what radio is."

—BILL FRANCIS



Radio personality Vaughn Harper brought his top-rated *Quiet Storm* to the people, broadcasting weekly from a Manhattan club.

## FOR SALE

Ellie Hayman '55

In February, Ellie Hayman was inducted into the Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Hall of Fame. That's not surprising, considering she completes 10 times the average number of annual transactions made by other realtors in the United States. For the past 12 years she's been the top revenue producer at Syracuse's Gallinger Real Estate/Better Homes and Gardens, where her average sales are several million dollars more than her competitors.

"I try to put my feet in the shoes of the buyers and the sellers," says Hayman, a 1955 College for Human Development graduate. "And I always say to myself, 'What can I do next?'"

Hayman has undertaken some unique marketing strategies, including a billboard over Route 690 in Syracuse that offers seven easy steps to selling a home: her seven-digit telephone number.

—ANDREA C. MARSH





## EUROPE UNITED

Willy De Clercq G '51

Updates about the Treaty of Maastricht appear almost daily in European newspapers. The treaty, if ratified, will economically unite the 12-member countries of the European Community, creating the world's largest free-trade zone. Although the majority of Europeans are in favor of enacting the treaty, it has been hotly contested by others, who are pessimistic about what Maastricht will actually mean for them and their country.

Willy De Clercq, chairman of the committee on external economic relations of the European Parliament and a strong proponent of Maastricht, is at the forefront of these discussions.

"My prediction is that Maastricht will be ratified by the middle of this year," says the native of Ghent, Belgium. Although he is disappointed by the lack of political unity within Europe, he says the monetary and fiscal aspects of the treaty have been extremely positive.

De Clercq has been instrumental in helping position Europe in the world market. In his current role, he is responsible for advising the European Parliament on its international economic policies such as trade tariffs and import/export rules. As a commissioner to the European Economic Community in the late eighties, he was in charge of external relations and commercial policy.

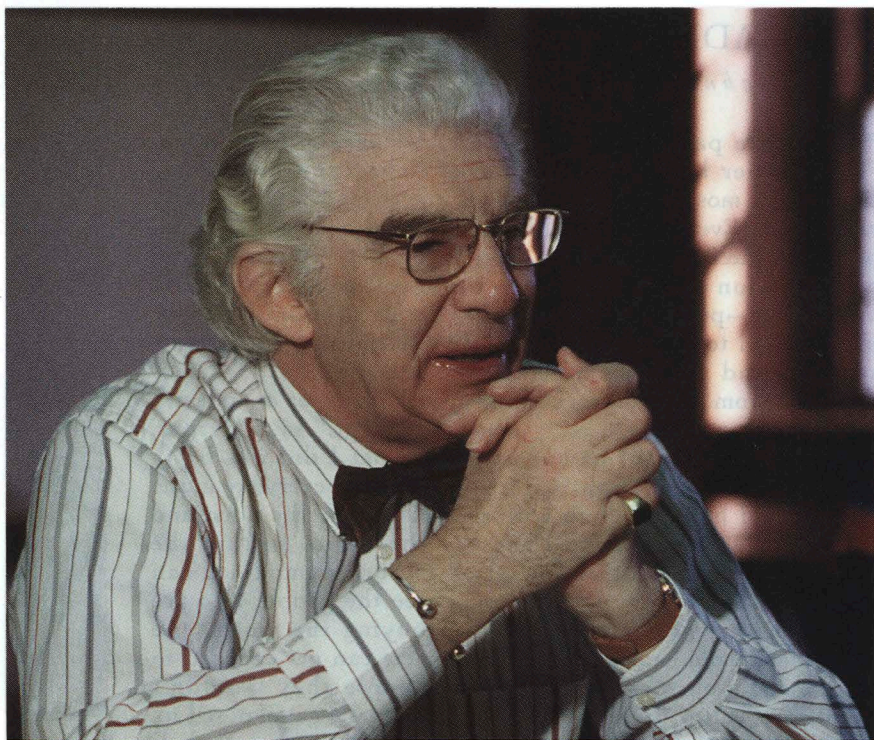
De Clercq, who received his master's degree from the Maxwell School in 1951, has been involved in politics for more than four decades, holding several key posts in Belgium and greater Europe.

As the outcome of Maastricht unfolds, De Clercq hopes to continue helping to shape the new Europe.

"The Common Market is important, but we need to be more than just a community of commerce," he says. "We need to be a community of peoples."

"We need a strong Europe and credible European union as a reliable ally of the United States, playing a role of balance in the rapidly changing, developing, and uncertain world."

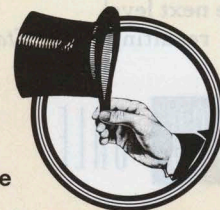
—ANDREA C. MARSH



STEVE SARTORI

*The Treaty of Maastricht will be ratified, predicts Willy De Clercq, a committee chair of the European Parliament. Although economic unity seems imminent, he says political unity is slower to develop.*

### HATS OFF



- **Warren Rudman**, a 1952 graduate of the School of Management, has become a partner at the Washington, D.C., office of one of New York City's premier law firms, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. Rudman, ranked among the nation's most influential senators (R-New Hampshire) during his recently concluded two-term career.
- **Christine Varney**, a 1982 recipient of a master's degree in public administration from the Maxwell School, has been named assistant to the President and secretary of the Cabinet by President Bill Clinton. Varney, an attorney, previously served as general counsel to Clinton's presidential campaign. Before that, she practiced law with the Washington, D.C., firm of Hogan and Hartson and was chief counsel of the Democratic National Committee.
- **William Rosenberg**, a 1961 recipient of a bachelor's degree from Maxwell's American Studies program, has received the Maxwell School's Spirit of Public Service award in recognition of his work in environmental protection and energy management. As an assistant administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency during the Bush Administration, Rosenberg was responsible for developing and implementing the first major revisions to the Clean Air Act in 12 years.





Diane Siegel, with Jeopardy host Alex Trebek, was the first contestant in 1993 to qualify for Jeopardy's annual tournament of champions. Siegel won \$65,479 on Jeopardy last October.

## WHO IS A WINNER?

*Diane Siegel '71, G'72*

On a recent alumni survey, Diane Jones Siegel listed her occupation as "housewife/quizzshow contestant." Her joke turned out to be an understatement when she became a five-night undefeated champion on the popular game show *Jeopardy*. Her winnings totaled \$65,479 and she became 1993's first contestant to qualify for the annual tournament of champions this fall.

Siegel has watched *Jeopardy* since childhood and regularly plays along at home, but she prepared for the show by checking out children's books from the library. "I'm a visual learner, and children's books have great illustrations," she says. "With *Jeopardy*, breadth is more important than depth. I checked out books on the states, presidents,

kings and queens, and history." She also watched a lot of travel videos and has always been an avid newspaper reader.

Siegel, who earned a bachelor's degree from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1971 and a master's from the School of Education in 1972, lives in Los Angeles. She was originally drawn to game shows after leaving her full-time teaching job to become a full-time mother. She had already won nearly \$20,000 as a contestant on other shows before her stint on *Jeopardy*.

Perhaps the most difficult part of the experience for Siegel, whose winning week aired in late January, was not being able to talk about it. (All five shows were filmed one afternoon in late October.) "I had to sign an agreement I wouldn't tell anyone but my immediate family the results of the show," she says. "This great thing just happened to you and you want to tell everybody."

—JANET STITES

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